

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 PRETOR 04236 191833Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----104691 191904Z /43

O 191747Z AUG 77
FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8498
INFO AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
AMEMBASSY GABORONE
AMEMBASSY LAGOS
AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO

C O N F I D E N T I A L PRETORIA 4236

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: PDEV, RH, UK, US
SUBJECT: SCHEDULE FOR PRESENTATION OF RHODESIA PROPOSALS

REF: LONDON 13853,

1. AS BOTHA REFLECTED IN LONDON, VORSTER CLEARLY PREFERS
THAT PUBLICATION OF PROPOSALS BE DELAYED UNTIL AFTER AUGUST 31.
THERE ARE PROBABLY TWO PRINCIPAL REASONS FOR THIS:

(A) HE BELIEVES THAT SMITH WILL BE TEMPTED OR FORCED FOR
CAMPAIGN REASONS TO SHOOT THEM DOWN IF PUBLISHED BEFORE
AUGUST 31. THIS WOULD MAKE SMITH'S POSSIBLE ACCEPTANCE OF THE
PACKAGE THAT MUCH MORE DIFFICULT; AND

(B) HE DOES NOT WANT ANYTHING INTRODUCED INTO THE RHODESIAN
CAMPAIGN WHICH SMITH'S OPPOSITION MIGHT USE TO REDUCE SMITH'S
MARGIN OF SUPPORT FOR AN EVENTUAL INTERNAL SOLUTION.

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2. FROM CONVERSATIONS WITH BOTHA YESTERDAY AND BRAND
FOURIE TODAY, I GATHER THEY ARE HOPEFUL THAT THE
COMPLICATIONS INTRODUCED BY THE LAGOS MEETING AND
THE MECHANICAL DIFFICULTIES OF GETTING THE FLPS TOGETHER
IN ONE PLACE WILL WORK TO DELAY PUBLICATION OF THE
PROPOSALS UNTIL AFTER AUGUST 31. THERE HAS BEEN NO
FURTHER MOVE TO PRESS US FOR DELAY, BUT THEY MAY WELL BE

PURSUING THIS OBJECTIVE THROUGH OWEN, HAVING CONSIDERED THAT
PERSUADING THE US WAS OUT OF THE QUESTION.

3. IT SEEMS TO ME THAT IF THE AUGUST 31 ELECTIONS AND
HOW SMITH EMERGES FROM THEM IS NO LONGER GERMANE SINCE UNDER
OUR PROPOSALS HE MUST GO SOON ANYWAY, WE SHOULD MOVE AHEAD
WITH FLP AND NATIONALIST LEADERS CONSULTATION AND
PUBLICATION AS RAPIDLY AS WE CAN IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN
MOMENTUM. ONLY IF WE WERE REASONABLY CERTAIN THAT SMITH WOULD
ACCEPT THE PROPOSALS AFTER AUGUST 31 (WHICH WE ARE NOT)
OR WE KNEW THAT VORSTER WOULD BE WILLING TO APPLY HIS
FULL MUSCLE AFTER, BUT NOT BEFORE, AUGUST 31 (WHICH
WE DO NOT AND PRESENT EVIDENCE POINTS TO CONTRARY)
WOULD IT SEEM IN OUR INTEREST TO PURPOSELY POSTPONE
ACTION UNTIL AFTER THE RHODESIAN ELECTIONS.
BOWDLER

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